

AFRICA ACTION SHEET



WINTER 2011-2012

Will the Kyoto Protocol survive the Durban climate talks?

Financial disagreements, a pressing need to reduce emissions faster and the unlikelihood of an international agreement over the Kyoto Protocol, leaves Durban looking less than promising.

Running from 28 November to 9 December COP-17 (17th conference of the parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) will concentrate minds because the first phase of the international climate treaty, the Kyoto Protocol, expires in 2012.

There are three main stumbling blocks to progress:

1. Disagreement on Kyoto itself. The developing countries want to keep the Protocol, as the only legally binding agreement which requires the rich world to make necessary (but far from sufficient) cuts in emissions of greenhouse gases.

The US has refused to ratify the Protocol, saying it won't

accept constraints that do not apply to the world's other principal greenhouse polluter, China, which like other developing countries, is exempt from Kyoto's provisions.

In view of this stalemate by the US, the EU is prepared to ditch Kyoto and favours a new and as yet undefined way to reduce emissions.

2. Cost Both mitigation and adaptation (reducing emissions, and learning to live with the consequences of those you cannot avoid) are expensive, and the developing world says the rich are not keeping their promises to help them to pay to pollute less.

3. The speed and extent of cuts in emissions needed. Kyoto requires developed countries to cut theirs collectively to around 5% below what they were in 1990. Most climate scientists say what's needed is cuts of 80-90% below 1990 by the middle of this century.

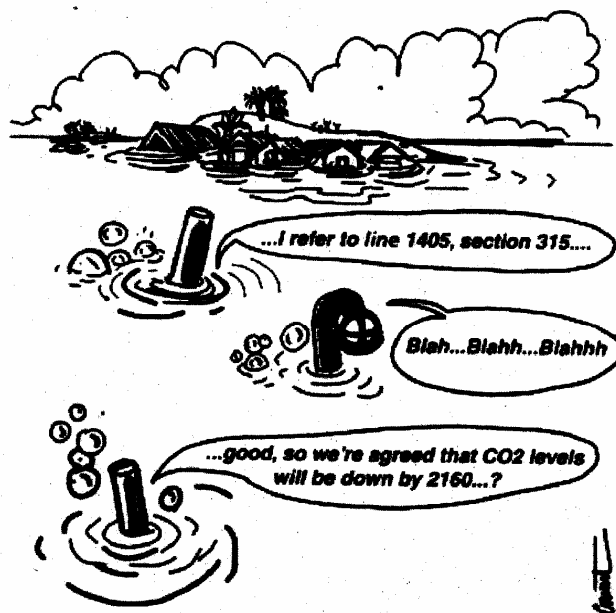
PROGRESSIO warns:

The Government is going to backtrack on its commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions to 50% of 1990 levels by 2025. Please write to your MP asking for reassurance from the Prime Minister that the Government will stick to its target.

For further details go to ó

www.progressio.org.uk/no-Uturns

You can find out the name and address of your MP by visiting: www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps



BIOFUELS ARE NOT CARBON NEUTRAL

On October 7th, 2011, 168 scientists have warned on the so-called öbiofuelsö in a [joint letter](#) addressed to the EU. Energy derived from field crops is by no means environmentally friendly, despite the European Union's claims. öTo promote biofuels as being carbon neutral cannot be supported scientificallyö, the researchers said. In favour of agro-energy, the rain forests are cleared and world hunger is exacerbated because of rising food prices.

Visit: www.rainforest-rescue.org

Click on *take action*

COTTON INJUSTICE

Cotton supports the livelihoods of 15 million people in Africa and many farmers are dependent on cotton as their main source of income.

But the US Government and the EU give huge subsidies to their cotton farmers which drives down the price of cotton on the world market leaving millions of African cotton farmers unable to get a fair price and struggling to scrape a living.

The subsidies are illegal and unfair and removing them is the first vital step in the fight for cotton justice.

Traidcraft and the **Fairtrade Foundation** are campaigning for European subsidies to be reformed.

For more information visit

www.traidcraft.co.uk/campaign

Traidcraft is calling on **Edward Davey MP**, the UK government minister responsible for **WTO** issues to press for the reduction of subsidies at the **WTO Ministerial summit in December**.

To order cards to send to Mr Davey phone:
0191 497 3981

The Africa Action Sheet is produced by the:

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Dates for your Diary:

Nov 13 **Remembrance Sunday**

Nov 28 ó 9 Dec

UN Climate Talks in Durban, SA

Dec 1 **World Aids Day (Red Ribbon Sunday)**

Jan 15 **Peace Sunday**

Jan 18-25 **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

Feb 4 **Traidcraft event**

Register at: www.makeitfair.co.uk/traidcraftevent2012

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

This year the theme for the week comes from the churches in Poland. Change has played an important role in their history. As they see themselves changed and transformed by the many upheavals of their past and sustained by their faith they feel themselves more closely conformed to Christ. Change is also at the heart of the ecumenical movement. Praying for this transforming unity we pray also for change in our world.

Resources for 2012 are available from the **Churches Together** website www.ctbi and available as downloads from the [resources page](#).

There is also an order form to purchase the material in a published format.

This year, for the first time, [Christian Aid](#) has participated in the preparation of these materials and you will find within the resources some important pointers to the vital work of Christian Aid in the relief of poverty and in changing our world to one which is more just.

Good News: European Commission adopts *ROBIN HOOD TAX*.

President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso recently announced that the European Commission has adopted the proposal for a Financial Transaction Tax. Barroso, addressing the Commission in his *State of the Union* speech, said that banks needed to pay back their debt to taxpayers. "In the last three years, member states have granted aid and provided guarantees of þ4.6tn to the financial sector," he said. "It is time for the financial sector to make a contribution back to society." Under Barroso's proposal the tax would take effect in 2014 and raise around þ57bn (£50bn) a year.

But money raised shouldn't just plug a fiscal hole in Europe ó leaders should listen to Bill Gates and ensure money goes to poor people at home and abroad hit by the economic crisis.

How to convince the UK Government to join in:

The big sticking point is no doubt going to be Cameron and Osborne's intention to veto the project. As it currently stands, the EU proposal just appears to be a way of providing more money for the EU ó a proposal unacceptable to Eurosceptics in the UK, especially as the enormous level of financial transactions in the UK would mean that the UK would be paying a very large proportion of the total.

To get the UK government to sign up, the proposition needs to be changed so that each country can keep say 50% of the revenue. In the case of the UK, where financial transactions in 2008 reported to the Bank for International Settlements were running at \$2,128 trillion, a 0.1% tax could generate so much revenue that the EU would certainly not need more than 50%. And with the remaining money, the UK could abolish all the other taxes, pay off the national debt and relaunch public spending!